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Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council calls for immediate cease-fire in Yemen, saying conflict there could endanger peace and security in region; asks Secretary-General to send fact-finding mission to area to assess prospects for renewed peace efforts.

+ Security Council, in Presidential statement, demands immediate and unconditional compliance with resolution 913 (1994), requiring cease-fire agreement in Gorazde and throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina; calls on parties to resume serious peace efforts without preconditions.

+ Secretary-General, in report to Security Council, says hopes for agreement on Cyprus confidence-building package have been dashed because of Turkish Cypriot stance.

+ MINURSO Identification Commission begins process of identifying persons qualified to vote in Western Sahara referendum.

+ Secretary-General appoints military advisers from Belgium, France and Malaysia to assist his Representative in Cambodia following recent departure of Military Liaison Team.

+ United Nations report says population growth remains high in Africa despite AIDS toll; incidence of disease in labour force likely to reduce agricultural and industrial output.

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The Security Council today called for an immediate cease-fire in Yemen, saying the situation there could endanger peace and security in the region. In unanimously adopting resolution 924 (1993), the Council urged an immediate end to the supply of arms and other matériel which might contribute to the continuation of the conflict.

The Council reminded all concerned that their political differences could not be resolved through the use of force, and urged them to return immediately to peace negotiations. It asked the Secretary-General to send a fact-finding

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mission to the area as soon as practicable to assess prospects for a renewed dialogue among all concerned, and for further efforts by them to resolve their differences. It also asked the Secretary-General to report on the situation not later than one week after the completion of the mission.

The Council expressed appreciation for the efforts of the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and neighbouring and other States to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict, and to ensure peace and stability in Yemen.

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The Security Council today reiterated the urgent need for a comprehensive cessation of hostilities throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and called on the parties to resume, without preconditions, serious efforts to reach a political settlement. In a statement read out by its President, Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby (Oman), the Council strongly demanded immediate, full and unconditional compliance with resolution 913 (1994), which required the immediate conclusion of a cease-fire agreement in Gorazde and throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. It endorsed the efforts of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to ensure implementation of that resolution, and called on the parties to cooperate fully with the Force.

The Council said it fully supported efforts by the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the UNPROFOR Force Commander to negotiate a cessation of hostilities, and welcomed the decision to convene a meeting with the parties in Geneva tomorrow. It also welcomed the reported decision of the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serb party to attend that meeting. The Council strongly encouraged the parties to negotiate in good faith, so that an agreement could be reached as quickly as possible.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has said that hopes for an agreement on his package of confidence-building measures for Cyprus have been dashed because of a lack of will on the Turkish Cypriot side. In a report to the Security Council dated 30 May, he said he found it hard to understand why the proposals for Varosha and Nicosia International Airport had not been accepted. They were eminently reasonable and fair, and would have brought major benefits to the Turkish Cypriot community without compromising its security or political position. The community would now forgo transportation and trade benefits, and an estimated 20 per cent growth in economic output.

The report outlined five options for the Council to consider in view of the unsatisfactory situation. It might conclude that there was no political will to settle the Cyprus dispute, and redirect United Nations peacemaking and peace-keeping resources elsewhere; it might conclude that a good offices mission was inadequate, and use coercive measures to compel the Turkish Cypriot side to be more flexible; or it might set the confidence-building package aside and resume talks on questions of substance. By the fourth option, all concerned might undertake a fundamental reflection on the Cyprus problem. The Secretary-General said he could consult in depth with Council

members, the Guarantor Powers, the Cypriot leaders and others, and explore far-reaching approaches. In his final option, he said the international community might renew efforts to gain agreement on the package, building on the fact that it had already been accepted in principle.

The Secretary-General went on to say that if the Council chose any option other than the first, it should keep the United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in existence to maintain peace on the island and ensure a climate conducive to successful peacemaking.

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The Identification Commission of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) today began the process of identifying persons qualified to participate in the referendum. A large number of applications has been received on both sides -- in Western Sahara and in refugee camps in the Tindoup area -- and preliminary analysis has already been completed.

The Identification Commission is now preparing notifications to concerned persons, advising them when and where to appear for registration. Those persons must provide identification and proof of eligibility to vote before the Commission will register them on a preliminary voters' list.

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Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has appointed three military personnel from Belgium, France and Malaysia to advise his Representative in Cambodia, Benny Widyono. In a report to the Security Council dated 31 May, the Secretary-General said the team would help Mr. Widyono to fulfil his mandate following the recent departure of the United Nations Military Liaison Team.

The Secretary-General noted that fighting continued in the north and north-western parts of the country causing some 30,000 refugees to cross into Thailand. Meanwhile, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces had been restructured and previous factional forces had been incorporated into all command levels. However, inadequate administrative support, poor infrastructure and logistics and extensive minefields had contributed to low morale in the Armed Forces.

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Despite the devastating death toll from AIDS, population growth in African countries remains high, according to a United Nations study, "AIDS and the Demography of Africa". Although AIDS will kill 9 million people in 15 sub-Saharan African countries by the year 2005, their populations are expected to double in the meantime.

The report said AIDS would lead to stagnation and even decreases in life expectancy in Africa. People in their most productive years would suffer disproportionately, affecting the size and the quality of the labour force, and reducing agricultural and industrial output. High infection rates for men and women would also affect the welfare of children and the elderly, who were traditionally cared for by the extended family in Africa.

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General recommends that Security Council extend UNAMIR mandate for six months, saying humanitarian disaster and violence in Rwanda require urgent action; accuses international community of failing to respond to genocide.

+ Rwandan Government and RPF hold second round of cease-fire talks under aegis of UNAMIR, exchanges of civilians trapped behind confrontation lines to resume tomorrow.

+ IAEA says it is now impossible to determine if Democratic People's Republic of Korea has diverted nuclear material because of discharge operations at five megawatt reactor.

+ Secretary-General expresses concern at reported Israeli air attack in Lebanon, and at subsequent rocket attack on northern Israel.

+ Special Representative Akashi postpones Bosnian peace talks in Geneva because of Bosnian Serb military presence in Gorazde exclusion zone.

+ Secretary-General appoints Lakhdar Brahimi as Special Envoy for Yemen and head of upcoming fact-finding mission to area.

+ Special Representative Akashi authorizes use of NATO close air support after shelling of UNPROFOR base in Bosnia and Herzegovina yesterday; authorization withdrawn after firing ceases.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) be extended for six months, saying the humanitarian disaster and violence there require urgent and decisive action. In a report to the Security Council dated 31 May, he said further extensions would be needed. While the Rwandan parties had begun cease-fire talks, national reconciliation would not come easily, and the Organization had a duty to help however it could. He said he would establish a trust fund for Rwanda and appealed for generous contributions to it.

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The Secretary-General said the massacres in Rwanda constituted genocide, because the victims belonged to a particular ethnic group. The international community's reaction demonstrated "its extreme inadequacy to respond urgently with prompt and decisive action to humanitarian crises entwined with armed conflict", he continued. UNAMIR's presence on the ground had been reduced when the carnage started; now the international community appeared "paralysed" in reacting to the Mission's revised mandate. "We all must recognize that...we have failed in our response to the agony of Rwanda, and thus have acquiesced in the continued loss of lives", he stressed. The crisis revealed the absence of a collective political will, and the entire system had to be reviewed to strengthen its reactive capacity.

The Secretary-General urged the Rwandan parties to end the killing immediately, citing evidence that the overwhelming responsibility lay with the "interim Government" and the Rwandan Government forces. An end to the killings must be concomitant with a cease-fire, and UNAMIR would make every effort to facilitate the talks underway. The Mission's immediate priority was to relieve the suffering of the displaced population and the fears of civilians under threat. However, humanitarian operations required adequate security conditions, and Member States must give UNAMIR the resources necessary to implement its mandate.

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The Government of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) today held a second round of cease-fire talks under the aegis of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR). The parties discussed the issue of civilians trapped behind the lines of confrontation, and agreed that exchanges should resume tomorrow. They also agreed to continue the talks at a later date, according to a United Nations spokesman.

Meanwhile, officials from the Department of Peace-keeping Operations met yesterday at Headquarters with United States officials for discussions regarding UNAMIR. They reached an agreement on the leasing of 50 armoured personnel carriers for use by the Mission, and the vehicles could be delivered within weeks, the spokesman said.

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The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) today said that it was now impossible to determine whether the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had diverted fuel from its five megawatt nuclear reactor as a result of discharge operations there. The Agency noted that it was reporting that conclusion to the Security Council, and that its Director-General, Hans Blix, would brief an informal meeting of the Council shortly.

In a Presidential statement on Monday, the Council strongly urged the People's Republic "only to proceed with the discharge operations at the five megawatt reactor in a manner which preserves the technical possibility of fuel measurements, in accordance with the IAEA's requirements in this regard".

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep concern at reports of an Israeli air attack near Ba'albek, Lebanon, this morning, according to a United Nations spokesman. Dozens of people were said to have been killed in the attack and scores wounded.

The Secretary-General said he regretted the escalation of violence at a sensitive time in the Middle East. He also expressed concern at reports that rockets had been fired into northern Israel later in the morning.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi today postponed talks in Geneva aimed at achieving a cease-fire in Bosnia and Herzegovina because Bosnian Serb forces had not withdrawn from the 3-kilometre exclusion zone around Gorazde, according to a United Nations spokesman. Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic had assured Mr. Akashi yesterday that all armed elements would be withdrawn from the zone. The spokesman did not exclude the possibility that "something could develop tomorrow," noting that the talks had been scheduled to last two days.

The talks were to have built on Mr. Akashi's iniative of 21 May, in which he put forward a framework for an immediate end to the fighting. That framework included provisions for the positioning of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) between the warring parties, freedom of movement for UNPROFOR and humanitarian agencies, and the release of all prisoners of war.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi as his Special Envoy for Yemen and head of the forthcoming fact-finding mission to the area. The Security Council, in resolution 924 (1994), yesterday asked the Secretary-General to dispatch the mission as soon as practicable to assess the prospects for a renewed dialogue on ending the conflict in Yemen. It also asked him to report on the situation not later than one week after the completion of the mission.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi yesterday authorized the use of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) close air support in defence of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel who had come under fire in south-west Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr. Akashi took that action after eight shells landed around a British Army base in Bugojno; he said close air support could be used on condition that the weapons in question were in the process of firing, or had been observed firing, near, or on, the base.

Meanwhile, at Mr. Akashi's direction, the Acting Commander of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina contacted the Chief of Staff of the Bosnian Serb Army, and received an assurance that no more shells would be fired near, or on, the British base. No further shelling was reported in Bugojno, and the UNPROFOR Force Commander subsequently withdrew authority to use air support.

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